

HISTORY OF SEATTLE BRANCH

Reported February 24, 1941

Mr R. P. Rice was made Company Representative in Seattle on November 6, 1907. (Place of business not known.) The Ford Motor Company was licensed to do business in the State of Washington on December 23, 1907.

In October 1909, the Seattle Branch was opened as a Sales and Service Branch, in a rented building at 19th Avenue North and Mercer Street, Seattle, with Mr. Rice as manager.

A new Branch Building was constructed in 1913 at the corner of Fairview Avenue and Valley Street. This building represented the very latest fireproof construction at the time. The main building, 104 feet by 207 feet, consisted of five floors and basement, including 117,698 square feet of floor space.

In January 1914, a new building was constructed on the corner of a plot of land consisting of one square block, of 2.11 acres. The total area under roof, including sheds, loading platforms and garage, was 157,698 square feet. This building was occupied in January, 1914, and assembly operations started in March, 1914, during which month 575 cars were assembled.

Mr. Fred Rockelman succeeded Mr. Rice as manager on July 9, 1916, and remained in this position until January 1st, 1919, when Mr. Nathan Udell became manager. Mr. Udell died on July 25th, 1919. During the several months in which Mr. Udell was ill, Mr. Hale Young was Acting Manager.

In August, 1916, branches were started in Spokane, Washington, and Tacoma, Washington. Operations in these cities, however, were not continued very long. The Tacoma Branch was closed in July 1917, and the Spokane Branch in July, 1918, the territory involved being turned to the control of the Seattle Branch.

Operations were transferred to the plant at 4735 East Marginal Way in January, 1932. The building was constructed during the year 1931. The first cars were assembled in the East Marginal Plant in May 1932, two hundred fifty-two cars being assembled during that month. Assembly operations were discontinued late in the same year, and the Branch Building has since been operated as a sales and service branch. This building, of very modern construction, is located on a thirty-three acre plot on the Duwamish Waterway. The main building consists of a first floor 320 feet by 750 feet and second floor 160 feet by 750 feet. Total floor space, including craneway, cloakrooms and oil house, is 421,500 square feet.

The Oil House has storage capacity of 206,500 gallons. Marine shipping facilities consist of a 500 foot dock and a 150 foot slip by the oil house. The dock building encloses a craneway 100 feet wide, with ceiling clearance of 29 feet 6 inches, and is equipped with two ten-ton Lakeside Cranes. The dock also has a five-ton Gantry Crane for work at ship's side.

Mr. Donnelly was Branch Manager when the move was made to the East Marginal Plant. Mr. H. E. Wilcox was named manager on December 16, 1932, and remained in this position until September 11, 1939.

Mr. W. C. Patterson, present manager, was appointed on September 16, 1939.

This branch plant was sold to the U. S. Army in June, 1941, the branch remaining in a portion of the building temporarily.

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Branch History - Seattle, Plant History, Acc. 429, Box 2